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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, we thank You for the life and legacy of the man called Madiba Nelson Mandela, and for the exemplary footprints he left in the sands of time. Inspired by his great life, may our lawmakers deal fairly and wisely with the great issues of our time.

Lord, help our Senators to remain tethered to a firm faith in You, committing their lives and our country to Your will. May they demonstrate their faith daily, remembering that faith without action is not real. Empower them to work together for the peace and prosperity of America, as they seek spiritual moorings in today's turbulent times.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 9, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, a Senator from the State of Connecticut, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MURPHY thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT OF 2013—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 243, S. 1356.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 243, S. 1356, a bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to strengthen the United States workforce development system through innovation in, and alignment and improvement of, employment, training, and education programs in the United States, and to promote individual and national economic growth, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in morning business until 4 o'clock this afternoon. At 4 p.m. the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1197, the National Defense Authorization Act. At 5 p.m. the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Patricia Millett to be U.S. circuit judge for the DC Circuit postcloture. At 5:30 p.m. then, the Senate will vote on confirmation of the Millett nomination.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1774, S. 1775, H.R. 1965, AND H.R. 2728

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I think there are four bills—and the clerk can help both of us—at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1774) to reauthorize the Undetectable Firearms Act of 1988 for 1 year.

A bill (S. 1775) to improve the sexual assault prevention and response programs and activities of the Department of Defense, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 1965) to streamline and ensure onshore energy permitting, provide for onshore leasing certainty, and give certainty to oil shale development for American energy security, economic development, and job creation, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 2728) to recognize States' authority to regulate oil and gas operations and promote American energy security, development, and job creation.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings with respect to these bills en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

THE NEXT TWO WEEKS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, welcome back. I hope the Acting President pro tempore and staff and all the other Senators had a wonderful Thanksgiving. It was a very good Thanksgiving for us. We had all of our children and all of our grandchildren, except one; she had to work. She lives in New York now.

This week the U.S. Senate begins a short 2-week work period, and I hope it is only 2 weeks. But it could bleed over the weekend before Christmas. I know I come to the floor and say a lot of times that we are going to have to work weekends, but we may really have to work the next couple weekends. We have had a wonderful 2-week break. It was important for all of us.

REMEMBERING NELSON MANDELA

But before I discuss the business before this body, I mourn—as we all mourn—the loss but I also celebrate the life of South Africa's great emancipator Nelson Mandela. He once said: "Difficulties break some men but make

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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